

ABSTRACT

A method of organizing and rescuing simultaneously failing connections in a communications system using a multiple-access forward rescue channel is disclosed. The method includes defining the multiple-access forward rescue-channel configuration using a common long-code mask and a reserved or common orthogonal channel code. Signaling on the multiple-access forward rescue channel bears MS-addressed rescue handoff messaging. The multiple-access forward rescue channel is transmitted by one or more sectors in the network for use in soft handoffs as well as rescue. A failing MS may attempt to receive a message addressed to the failing MS on the multiple-access forward rescue channel and have its connection rescued using the message information.